1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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deified because of her commendable deeds. Originally, she was the protectress of seafarers, and her statue was brought from the mainland by the earliest Chinese immigrants to Taiwan. However, over the years the residents of the Hsin Hsing area have endowed Matsu with considerably greater talents, and today she is considered capable of doing many things—curing the sick, aiding in the production of a boy child, bringing rain when it is needed, and even helping someone win the National Lottery. The villagers tell a story about a man from a village in the area who went to the Lukang Matsu temple and prayed for success in the lottery. When he did not win, he returned to the temple and with a sword lopped off one of Matsu's ears.

Middle-aged village woman often discuss seriously Matsu's magnificent feats. One day several women told "how, several years earlier, Matsu had saved some boys from drowning in the Strait of Formosa just off Lukang. When a sudden storm came up, the boys' boat sank and they were about to drown when Matsu came and saved them." The women debated the question of just how Matsu had accomplished this, one saying that the goddess had provided a bridge for them to get back to shore and another that the goddess had furnished another boat and pulled them ashore.

Numerous other Taiwanese also credit Matsu with enormous powers,[2] and each year many people from far-off villages and even cities travel to Lukang in long processions by hired trucks, bicycles, pedicabs, sedan chairs, and on foot to worship Matsu on her birthday. Some Hsin Hsing villagers also go to Lukang to worship Matsu on this day, but most worship her at home because they are too busy to travel to Lukang. However, Lukang is considered a very exciting place when it is filled with the tens of thousands of people who have come to worship Matsu, and many villagers, especially young people and women, go there in the evening to watch the festivities.

In addition to the recognition which is accorded Matsu on her birthday, for at least the last forty years Hsin Hsing and eleven other villages in the area have held a joint procession each year to worship Matsu some weeks after her birthday. About this time of the year, when the irrigation water is running low in the fields of Hsin Hsing and two neighboring villages of the other eleven, the occasion is taken to ask Matsu to bring much-needed rains for the rice crop. As far back as the late 1800's, these same twelve villages were allied together to provide mutual defense against the many bandits who then ravaged the area. While the necessity for such defense was eliminated soon after the arrival of the Japanese, the cooperative relationship between these villages has been continued through the annual Matsu procession. The Matsu procession, then, still provides an occasion which brings the people together, not only the residents of a single village, but those of many villages. In the Hsin Hsing area it is the only time

independent units. Rather than a great extended family living under one authority and one roof, what one typically finds in a large compound is a number of related but independent households. They will usually share the use of the kōng-thîⁿ:, the yard between the two wings of the house, the well if there is one, and the toilet, but each family will have its own bedroom and its own stove, even if this requires the building of two stoves in one kitchen.

The stages in the evolution of a house from a small one-family structure to a large complex compound are clearly marked in the use and care of the kōng-thîⁿ:. When a house is new and inhabited by a single kê, the kōng-thîⁿ: will be always the best kept room in the building. The interior walls will be freshly white-washed; the floors will have been swept daily; and the furniture will be as expensive as the family can possibly afford. After the sons of the original family divide their parental kê, the kōng-thîⁿ: and its furniture will begin to deteriorate, for their wives will be unwilling to devote their time or money to what they regard as "public property." So long as their mother is still alive, however, the room will never be in marked disrepair. What work she cannot do herself, she will badger her daughters-in-law into doing. The real decline of the kōng-thîⁿ: begins when she and her husband die. There is then no one among the residents of the house who has a responsibility towards the settlement as a whole, and as a result no one is willing to give up the time or money to the upkeep of the kōng-thîⁿ:. As one of the most accurate of Chinese proverbs states, "What is public is for everyone's use and is no one's responsibility." The inevitable result is that the kōng-thîⁿ: and its

3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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lifetime, but it would help support his children, his grandchildren, and his descendants for generations to come. With this beginning the family's land would increase—their harvests would buy more land, the family would prosper and grow. In this Lim Han-ci could take great satisfaction. As a well-known proverb puts it, "Succeeding is like a turtle climbing up a mountain." Lim Han-ci had taken the first few steps up that mountain, and with the vision of the long climb ahead he disciplined himself and his family. He was well aware of the other half of the proverb: "Failing is like water running down a hill."

Lim Han-ci was respected and grudgingly admired, but his Puritan temperament did not endear him to his contemporaries. He knew all there was to know about farming and when he decided on an innovation in the customary way of doing things, his neighbors usually followed him. He was not an active member of the groups of men who sat around on summer evenings, talking and smoking, but when an important decision had to be made, he was always consulted. He was not a man to ignore or to take advantage of. An old farmer of his own generation told me, "He would help anyone who asked for help, but he treated very unceremoniously and very severely anyone who tried to put something over on him. He often gave water from his rice paddies to those who asked him for it, but he would starve a man before he gave him the water if he tried to steal it in the night. He was a man who would 'eat the soft, but not the hard.'" And, if the adults walked quietly around Lim Han-ci, children literally fled at the sight of him. Aside from his known disapproval of any form of play or frivolity, he was also renowned for his fiery temper. Even his own children admit to being terrified of him.

In the shadow of such a glowering personage it is not surprising that little is remembered about Lim Han-ci's wife. Her adopted daughters and her grandchildren describe her as a quiet woman of gentle kindness who worked hard but always had time for a frightened or hurt child. No one in the village mentions her, and the family rarely talks about her except on the anniversary of her death when they argue over what might have been her favorite food so that they can send it to her in offerings. She must have died before the marriage of her second son because Lim Chui-ieng, who complains about everything else, does not complain about her mother-in-law. Her children speak of her with warmth and fondness, but she is now only a memory. Perhaps they remember her gentleness and think of her in quiet

3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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smiles, and when you ask for money his mouth is very stern. I gave Ong A-giok her wages for weeding the cucumbers only two days ago. She did the work many weeks ago. I told my uncle that we owed her money, but he hadn't done anything about it. I thought he had paid her long ago, and I was very embarrassed. Whenever money has to be given out, it is always like this. Even if I don't ask for any money for three months, he will never say, 'Well, you must need money. Here is some so you will have it when you need to buy something.' "

I asked if his uncle might not think he kept money out for his own use when he sold vegetables. "You can't sell vegetables every day," he said, "and besides he knows enough to guess how much we can get for the vegetables we sell.

" 'Even a shrewd man of great ability cannot get past a pretty girl guarding a gate' [a common proverb]. You can't blame him for all these problems. You have seen how that woman [Lim Chui-ieng] can nag. If she is eating and he comes in from the factory, she puts down her bowl immediately and follows him into the bedroom to talk. If she finds him sitting alone, she will hurry over to ask him about this and that and the long and the short."

By my own observation I knew this to be the case, but it did not fit in very well with some gossip I had been hearing in the village. Hoping A-bok's talkative mood would last, I asked him, "If she treats him so well, why did he go out to find a mistress that time?"

"It was her own fault," he answered. "I really wish they would fight again like they used to." A-bok grinned naughtily. "If it hadn't been for my mother and I, Lim Chui-ieng would have been beaten to death a long time ago. One time in particular it was really bad. Lau Kim-chiok was living in that house where her mother lives now. One night Lim Chui-ieng went over and looked in the window and saw my uncle's shoes in there. She was afraid to do anything by herself, so she got one of our friends to go with her--he was living in our house just then. He went with her, but she didn't tell him where they were going, and when they got there she broke the window. My uncle came out and chased her back to our house, trying to hit her. She tried to go into my grandfather's room to hide, but he wouldn't let her and said, 'I'm not going to get involved in this anymore. You solve your own problems.' She had no place to hide so she came into my mother's room. I pulled uncle away and my mother stood between them. Lim Chui-ieng shouldn't have gotten our friend involved because my uncle